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## WHY STUDY GERMAN?

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THE situation brought about by the recent war caused educators and men of affairs to give to this question such consideration as language study has seldom received. The study of German was put on trial before the jury of public opinion. That the verdict was severe is not surprising; that it was not more severe is gratifying. It is a tribute to the calmness and wisdom of our educators and statesmen that, even in times of stress, they were able to restrain within the limits of reason those popular emotions which might have been fatal to German language study. Now the question presents itself: "Why were these men, often contrary to their emotions, desirous of saving this study from destruction?" Is the study of German of any value to American civilization?

The very fact that it has been able to weather a storm of such violence and duration is proof conclusive that the preceding question must be answered in the affirmative. If we in America are teaching and studying German today, it is surely not because of any love for Germany or of any sentimentality for things German. It is rather for a selfish purpose: we are convinced that it is to our advantage to do so. For this reason England and France are not only continuing the study but are intensifying it.

Like the study of all modern languages that of German has three main types of value, a pedagogical or disciplinary, a practical or utilitarian, and an aesthetic or cultural value.

The disciplinary value of a subject is of equal worth to all those who pursue it, regardless of their future positions in society. This is frequently offered as the defense for making algebra compulsory in the secondary or even in the graded schools. The same is true in some degree of Latin or Greek. But it may be said in behalf of these languages that they are especially valuable to English-speaking students because of the non-inflectional nature of their native tongue. Now herein lies one of the greatest advantages of German. It is by far the most highly inflected of the modern languages commonly taught in our schools. It thus affords our curricula a disciplinary value which, although exceeded by the formal training offered by the classical languages, is far in excess of that offered by any of the other modern languages.

Perhaps not all pupils will benefit directly by the

so-called practical value of the study of German, but it does have a vital practical value in commerce, science, industry, politics, etc. In this respect German will bear favorable comparison with the language of any other nation. Nor has its utilitarian worth been in any way impaired by the results of the war. Rather has it been increased. Germany, now as never before, needs the products of foreign countries to rehabilitate herself. Practically all these products she must buy from her former enemies. It is only reasonable to believe that, as far as feeling is concerned, America will be preferred, provided that we can meet our competitors on equal footing. If therefore, we are to compete for trade in the German markets, it will at least be desirable if not necessary to be as familiar with the German language as are the representatives of the foreign commercial houses. Again, if Germany is to be able to pay the reparations she must export to the utmost of her ability. Naturally, a goodly share of these exports will find their way to America. To facilitate this trade a knowledge of German will be an asset.

Germany's premier place in many of the sciences has long been recognized. The efficiency of organization of German industry is generally admitted. Although the former has perhaps become questionable as a result of the war, German science still stands in the forefront. If anything the organization of German industry has been made more efficient by the years of hardship through which it has passed. Scientists in general and chemists in particular find German practically indispensable as a tool to be used in their research. Why should our industrial chemists not acquaint themselves with the processes used in the German dye industry as soon as they are available? Why do practically all of our greater scientific schools require of their students a working knowledge of German? Why do some of our professors of chemistry find it necessary to use German texts in their classes? A command of German is not only desirable but necessary to the best results in every field of scientific endeavor, be it chemistry, physics, medicine, biology, mathematics or what not.

The war has taught us another lesson. The presence within our country of a group of men capable of using foreign languages is essential. If the dip-

lomatic relations in peace times require but a comparatively small number versed in this art, the rupture of these relations in times of war makes a larger number necessary. Each nation that aspires to be a world power must have a group of men capable of keeping informed at first hand of the methods and undertakings of the military of the other countries. To keep in touch with the workings of the German nation we must be posted as far as, and as accurately as is possible not only as to their methods of thinking with regard to war, i. e., their intentions, but also as to their inventions. The only way of doing this makes a knowledge of German a prerequisite. Once a state of war is reached the demand for those speaking the language of both allies and enemy reaches a maximum; expert linguists are in demand in both the civil and military branches of the government. Even those not expert are often pressed into service. During the late conflict it was not the least of our government's worries to find a sufficient number of American citizens equipped with an ability to use German. Even today the War Department is seeking men capable of using this and other foreign languages.

In the times of peace and friendship the teaching of foreign languages serves not only as a bond to cement the friendship and prolong the peace between the nations but also to produce that group of citizenry able to gauge the pulse of this friendship.

The practical advantages derived from language study are too extensive and varied to enumerate. Each individual might find different utilitarian purposes to which to devote the ability thus attained. But language study yields a sweeter and more precious fruit. It carries one above the sordid fields of commerce and battle into the empyrean realm of the spirit. The saying that he who knows two languages has two souls has become a common-place.

That German literature stands high among the literatures of the world is universally admitted. In the fields of religion, philosophy, literature and music there have arisen from the German people geniuses who have become world characters. Luther, Kant, Goethe, Beethoven belong, not to Germany alone, but to all the nations. For those who strive after the higher things of life German literature contains treasures of limitless value. Nor can any one lay claim to being truly cultured, without at least being acquainted, directly or indirectly, with the products of German thought and art.

True one may be able to gain this acquaintance through lectures, translations and other such methods. But let it be remembered that translations are after all long in the making, much that is valuable is never translated and all translations must fall short of the

original, if that be a master-piece. Poetry can never be translated.

Not only does the knowledge of German make available the cultural productions of the Germans, it is indispensable to those who desire to drink deeply of the products of genius of most other peoples. German scholarship and research have amassed funds of information concerning the cultural life of the other great literary and philosophic nations such as have perhaps been gathered by scholars of no other nation. These products of German scholarship cannot be disregarded by any investigator attempting scholarly work. Hence it is that our great institutions of liberal learning require of all candidates for an advanced degree a working knowledge of German. Some of the more thorough and advanced colleges even make this requirement of all candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

The colleges and universities are dependent greatly on the high schools for assistance. The elements of a foreign language can best be taught to younger pupils. Pedagogy recognizes that the young mind, being more plastic, is more susceptible to the formation of a new speech-consciousness; the youth's organs of speech, being more flexible, adapt themselves more quickly to the new sounds. For this reason the study of German should be begun in the secondary schools. If our high schools are denying their pupils this advantage serious thought should immediately be given to this shortcoming. Each year large numbers of pupils upon entering college find themselves handicapped because of this fault in the high school curricula and are compelled to begin a modern language or two in college, which late start is a great disadvantage.

It must be said to the credit of our secondary schools that the more progressive ones have already realized this situation and are offering instruction in German and French. Others are making plans for its introduction or re-introduction. Prominent among the cities which have recently re-introduced German are Washington (D.C.), New York and Providence (R.I.). Unless our secondary school graduates come to college as well prepared as the similar class of pupils in the other states, our colleges cannot be expected to turn out men as well trained linguistically as do the colleges that have better material with which to work. In the past the high schools of the State, like those of the South in general, have stood far behind those of the rest of the country in the teaching of modern languages, but a new day has dawned for us. The near future will witness a more extensive and intensive teaching of the modern languages to meet the new demands caused by America's abandoning her isolation and entering into the citizenship of nations.

The above are in brief a few of the reasons why German is taught and studied in our schools and colleges, the reason why the study of German has survived the war and is again advancing to the position it held in pre-war days. Its re-introduction into the schools that allowed it to lapse during the war, and the growth of the number of students in those institutions where the classes were small during the period of hostilities are proceeding steadily and naturally. This

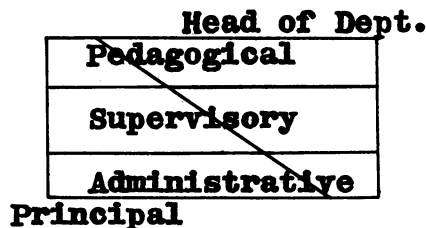
process is bound to continue until normal conditions are again established, for, after all, we are studying German for the same reason the English and French are studying it, and for the same reason the Germans are studying English and French, because we, like all enlightened people, realize that the knowledge of the languages and literatures of the great nations of the earth possess advantages which we are unable and unwilling to forego.

## THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

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IN most of our larger high schools the various departments are under the direct control of the head of department. In others one teacher is often designated as "teacher in charge" or head teacher. In any school employing any number of teachers who devote their time to teaching the same subject some system or other is worked out to give to one of them the responsibility or directing that department. So we find some schools electing a "chairman" who serves as head for a year, the office passing around among the various teachers of the department from year to year. Whatever the plan it is a wise administrative policy to centralize the direction and supervision of the department. In the larger high schools it is imperative as the principal is unable to assume direct charge of any department. However, this must not be construed to mean that the principal relinquishes entirely his control over the department, rather it is a dual responsibility. A diagram will show clearly the relationship of both principal and head of department to any department in the school.



The three main duties of principal and head of department are pedagogic, supervisory and administrative. A glance at the diagram shows that the head of department is responsible largely for the pedagogical, mainly for the supervisory and to some extent the administrative policies of his department. The principal's responsibility is in inverse proportion; his main duty toward the department is administrative, somewhat supervisory and slightly pedagogical. Thus it is

that while both exercise the same functions in relation to the department, the proportion is different.

It is not our purpose to sketch in detail the work of the principal. It is sufficient to say that his entire energy is devoted toward correlation of all the departments of the school in order to develop a harmonious enity. On the other hand, the head of department is directly responsible for the work of his department, and it is our intention to set forth in detail his duties under the three heads indicated.

On the pedagogic side the head of department is first of all responsible for the maintenance of high standards of teaching. He must be able to determine the weakness of any teacher in his department in giving instruction and suggest remedies for the improvement of such a teacher. This is paramount. There is considerable of poor teaching in our high schools and no department is an exception. But the head of department has to do the best with the teachers assigned him and his primary duty is to see that the teachers work effectively.

The head of department must also determine the content of the course of study. In some states this is set by the State Department of Education. In others it is left to the discretion of the local school authorities. In either case there is often a number of options allowed and these are the direct concern of the head of department. If he has charge of determining the course of study, he should see that it correlates with life conditions.

Having determined the content of the course of study, the head of department must organize the work so that uniform progress is made in all classes under his control. To accomplish this he must set before his teachers a definite syllabus of the work to be covered. It is well if this be rather definite. There can well be divisions of the work into terms or even months. Uniform progress will assure proper emphasis